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DE RUEHAA #0386 1041316
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 141316Z APR 06
FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7195
INFO RUCNOSC/OSCE POST COLLECTIVE
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 0472
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 1668
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 0025
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 0026
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 0382
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL//CCJ2/HSE/CCJ5//
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHINGTON DC//J5/RUE//
RUEAAIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC

UNCLAS ASHGABAT 000386

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN (PERRY)

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV PHUM PINR TX

SUBJECT: WRITER ESENOK DENIED PERMISSION TO EXIT
TURKMENISTAN TO ATTEND PEN CLUB AWARDS CEREMONY

REF: BRUSH-FOX/PERRY 4/14/06 EMAIL

¶1. (SBU) PEN Club award winner, writer Rahym Esenov, was told by the State Service for the Registration of Foreign Citizens on April 14 that he was on the list of citizens prohibited from traveling abroad. Subsequently, Minister of Foreign Affairs Rashit Meredov confirmed to Organization for Cooperation and Security in Europe Center in Ashgabat Ambassador Ibrahim Djikic in a hastily-called afternoon meeting that Esenov was not permitted to travel because of two convictions, "contraband and incitement to ethnic violence" and that the GOTX did not want international governments and agencies to demand explanations on internal matters regarding the criminal act of a Turkmenistani citizen.

¶2. (SBU) The OSCE Center in Ashgabat and post are sending a diplomatic notes over the weekend requesting information on the convictions against Esenov that warrant his in-country detention. (Note: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs works on Saturdays. End Note.) The OSCE Center and post have no information confirming the GOTX's claim that Esenov is still under in-country arrest as a consequence of February 2004 charges for smuggling contraband (740 copies of his book entitled "The Crowned Wanderer") and inciting ethnic violence. Esenov said he never was convicted, just accused.

¶3. (SBU) DCM and OSCE Human Dimensions Officer Benjamin Moreau will accompany Esenov and his daughter to the airport on April 17, when he will attempt to board the Lufthansa flight to New York via Frankfurt.

¶4. (SBU) Per ref email, embassy has informed PEN of this development. Embassy and OSCE also have repeatedly told the MFA to expect significant negative publicity as a result of this travel denial.

JACOBSON